



**DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION  
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL  
FIRE ENGINEERING DIVISION**

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**CALIFORNIA STATE FIRE MARSHAL  
FIRE ALARM ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Meeting Date: May 14, 2013

Meeting Location: Office of the State Fire Marshal, Training Conference Room  
1131 S Street, Sacramento, CA 95811

Meeting Time: 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

**Staff Present:**

Ben Ho, Division Chief  
James Parsegian, Supervising DSFM, Chair  
Ian Lyman, MST, BML Assistant Program Coordinator  
Glenn Tong, Retired Annuitant

**Members Present:**

\*Walter Brandes, Riverside County Fire Department  
\*Tom Connaughton, Intertek-ETL  
\*Shane Clary, Bay Alarm Company  
Rick Cortina, Pyro-Comm Systems, Inc.  
\*Ronald Farr, Underwriters Laboratories Inc. Regulatory Services  
\*Howard Hopper, Underwriters Laboratories Inc.  
\*Bill Hopple, Hopple & Co.  
\*Jay Levy, Hochiki America  
\*Rick Lewis, Rolf Jensen & Associates  
Michael Reeser, Santa Rosa Fire Equipment Services  
\*Richard Roberts, Honeywell Life Safety  
Patrick Ward, AON Fire Protection Engineering

**Members Absent:**

Ray Iverson, Sacramento Metropolitan Fire Department  
John Mapes, Foster City Fire Department  
Gary Dunger, Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development

**Guests Present:**

Gene Gantt, California State Firefighters' Association  
Al Ramirez, Underwriters Laboratories Inc.

\* *Via Conference Call*

## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

James Parsegian called the meeting to order at 10:01 A.M. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## **II. ROLL CALL and INTRODUCTIONS**

Ian Lyman took a roll call. A quorum was established.

## **III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Committee members reviewed the minutes of January 22, 2013. Rick Cortina made a motion to approve the minutes and Shane Clary seconded the motion. James Parsegian called for a vote and the minutes were approved unanimously as written.

## **IV. OLD BUSINESS**

### **A) Update on Title 19, California Code of regulations (CCR) that related to the implementation Senate Bill 1394 (SB 1394) was provided by Chief Ben Ho.**

- 1) It was explained that the law requires a smoke alarm that is solely battery operated, must have a battery capable of providing the power to that device for at least 10 years. The requirement is for smoke alarms and other device such as Carbon Monoxide (CO) is not required under SB 1394.
  - a) Smoke alarms that use wireless communication signals that communicate with another smoke alarm (interconnection) met the exception of this law.
  - b) Combination smoke/CO devices are subject to this law.
  - c) Howard Hopper mentioned that an exception for combination units may be needed other than conventional ionization units according to the recommendations in the Smoke Alarm Task Force report. Chief Ben Ho indicated that the current law did not authorize the OSFM the authority.
  - d) Howard Hopper indicated that there is section in the UL standard (UL 217, Section 63.1) outlines the testing requirement for battery. It states: "Where a non-replaceable battery is employed as a main source of power it shall provide power to the unit under intended ambient conditions for at least 10 years in the standby condition including novelty and weekly testing and operate the alarm for a minimum of four minutes of alarm, followed by seven days of trouble signal".
  - e) Bill Hopple expressed concern about CO portions of combination units that won't meet the 10 year battery requirements, unless CO and the smoke alarm are powered separately. There is indication that the CO sensor only last 7 years and this would create an issue for consumers.
- 2) Wireless devices that communicate and connect to a fire alarm control panel met the exception of this law.
- 3) Richard Roberts suggested adding language about "conductors and wireless"; Ben Ho said this can be reviewed in the work group.
- 4) Gene Gantt noted that the intent of SB 1394 was to transitioning battery operated smoke alarms into device with a long lasting battery and reduces fire deaths.
- 5) Richard Roberts brought up local ordinances that have technology specific requirements (ie. Dual sensor photoelectric and ionization) that conflict with SB 1394. Ten-year battery photoelectric ion batteries currently don't exist. Chief Ben Ho reminded the Committee

that local ordinances must be equivalent or more stringent than state requirements. This is state law and we must comply.

- 6) Chief Ben Ho noted that the regulations workgroup (Richard Roberts, Ronald Farr, James Parsegian, Ben Ho) needs to re-convene to amend the regulations language.
- B) Update on Assembly Bill 645 – Torres (AB 645)) was provided by Chief Ben Ho. It is a cleanup bill for SB 1494. It is identical to SB 745 as a back-up bill.
  - C) Gene Gantt gave an update on Senate Bill 745 (Committee on Transportation and Housing) which is also a clean-up bill for SB 1394. This bill is sponsored by the California State Firefighters Association (CSFA). He explained he is working with the National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA), smoke alarm industry, and CAL FIRE Legislative Office on the clean-up language.
  - D) James Parsegian provided an update on CI cable issue.
    - 1) It was noted UL has provided its position to the Committee.
    - 2) Al Ramirez provided a status about CI Cable.
      - a) UL has listed Systems 1850 and 120 (MC product) under UL Product Category FHIT via UL's Revised Program. This is accessible at UL Web site.
      - b) MI Cable is most diverse. Used for control, signal and power. It doesn't have the CI suffix.
      - c) MC Cable is a metal clad cable. It is used for power, but not a large gauge (18 to 6).
      - d) UL Standards Committee met in October 2012 and they will work on:
        - 1) Variations that could exist in production of wire and cable,
        - 2) Variations that could exist in installations of such systems,
        - 3) Other system complements (ie. toning, compounds used for pulling, conduit, junctions/boxes)
          - Task groups completed their work in October 2012.
          - A task group has been started to develop strategies to pinpoint any additional research that needs to take place.
          - Testing samples were increased and are finding consistent results.
          - Definition of testing samples is likely for family of products.
          - Follow up inspections that mimic other life safety products is likely.
      - e) An Interim Certifications program is in place.
      - f) It is anticipated that certified CI Cable should be coming out this summer per Al Ramirez.
    - 3) James Parsegian indicated the topic of CI Cable be closed.

#### **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

- A) A meeting is planned to update smoke alarm manufacturers about the implementation of SB 1394. The planned meeting date is mid-July 2013. Invitations will be sent out shortly.
- B) Honeywell Fire Systems BG-10 Series Pull Box. This issue is for information only. Information about this topic will be distributed to all Committee members after the meeting and no actions is required at this time.
- C) First Alert smoke alarm that had exploded battery.
  - 1) A handout was provided to the Committee to share information.

- 2) First Alert issued a Press Release in 2005 that notified consumers to replace the battery.
  - a) Duracell made an improvement to the battery to improve venting.
  - b) Bill Hopple said he plans to notify the Devices Committee and Fire Protection Officer organizations.

## **VI. OPEN FORUM**

- A) Rick Lewis brought up a SFM Information Bulletin from 2008 that discusses requirements about replacement of fire alarm control panels being contradictory to California Fire Code. The bulletin says the control panel must have visual notification brought to current California Fire Code when they are maintained.
  - 1) International Building Code (IBC) Code Interpretation calls for audio notification to be updated.
  - 2) Bill Hopple cited OSFM Code Interpretation 12-046 that set stage for dilemmas encountered by local jurisdictions; Bill Hopple offered information to Rick Lewis for background information and will report back to the Committee on the next meeting
- B) Assembly Bill 56 (AB 56) status was discussed; it is a bill to require Carbon Monoxide alarms in schools. Gene Gantt informed Bill Hopple that the bill is in suspense in Assembly Appropriations and that the bill language is as written. Gene Gantt indicated it may be amended to have required annual testing.

## **VII. ACTION ITEMS**

- Discuss 2008 Information Bulletin regarding versus Fire Code concerning fire alarm control panel replacement.

## **VII. NEXT MEETING**

- September 24, 2013 from 10:00 AM to noon (Pacific Standard Time) at the Office of the State Fire Marshal, 1131 S Street, Sacramento. A conference line and GoTo Meeting will be available.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

- Meeting adjourned by Chair James Parsegian, at 11:21 A.M.

Meeting Minutes Developed by:  
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